

MONIFIETH GOLF LINKS

WINTER PROGRAMME 2017-18

The following information summarises the programme of work to be undertaken by the greenkeeping staff over the winter; this is in addition to the normal work of grass cutting, aeration, bunker reconstruction, returfing of bare areas, and general maintenance activities.

Consultation with members

Following initial publication of this programme, comments have been received from members, and a number of amendments made.

- Responses from some members suggested that a ‘flattening out’ of the 13th green on the Ashludie course should not be undertaken. The Links Board was concerned that the front left of this green has sunk, and may continue to sink. Following further discussion the lifting of turf from this green will now be limited to a smaller area where the ground has sunk; when the greens turf is replaced, the greens staff will ensure that there is still a slope, but not so severe as at present.
- There were also comments on the gorse removal on the 10th fairway on the Medal course. As a result the gorse 150 yards from the tee on the right will be removed. Some of the overgrown gorse further up on the right of the fairway will be removed, but smaller gorse bushes will remain. The large gorse bushes on the left of this fairway just short of the green are encroaching, and will be removed; consideration is being given (no decision yet!) on adding a bunker in the left semi-rough (about 30 yards past the present fairway bunker) to give added protection to the hole since the gorse will have been removed.
- Comments were also received about sand in bunkers – both too much and too little sand. It is challenging for the greens staff to ensure that all 89 bunkers are in perfect condition all of the time. However, it is felt that much of the problem relates to the blowing of sand in the larger bunkers; in future, when bunkers are refurbished, the opportunity will be taken to convert the larger bunkers into smaller bunkers (or in some cases 2 smaller bunkers) in order to assist with this problem. Also members are reminded when raking a bunker to push the sand towards the bunker face to prevent the creation of downhill lies.

Bunkers

The main problem with bunkers recently has been the movement of sand caused by the strength of the wind; this has resulted in too much sand and/or too little sand in bunkers or in parts of bunkers. It is clear that this problem occurs in the larger bunkers where there is more space for the wind to blow sand. As bunkers require to be refurbished, it is the intention to replace some of the larger bunkers subject to wind with smaller, circular, pot bunkers (or in some cases 2 smaller bunkers). This policy has been tried at the right greenside bunker at the 15th Medal, and at the right greenside bunker on the 4th Ashludie where replacement by 2 smaller bunkers appears to have been more successful.

Gorse Management

Removal of gorse and broom is necessary in order to prevent its encroachment on grass and heather, and to prevent it providing a haven for rabbits. Small areas of gorse are welcome on the golf course, but not large dense areas where golf balls cannot be found.

Gorse will be removed from areas where it is becoming too dense, or is starting to encroach; for example right of 2nd Medal, right of Sandy's flats on 9th Medal, left and right of the 10th Medal, left and right of 13th Medal, left and right of 15th Medal, right of 11th Ashludie. Rough turf will be used to re-turf these areas which are in play, or easily visible; this will prevent these areas from being unsightly following gorse removal.

Tree Management

The previous programme of tree felling is complete, but due to the age of the trees, a substantial number are damaged or dangerous and require to be removed. Thinning of trees is also necessary – for example in the following areas –

Right of 12th fairway on Ashludie – danger to road from poplar trees. Complete, but subject to further inspection.

Back of 16th green Medal – thinning to improve windflow to green and reduce pine needles.

Right of 16th fairway Medal – thinning to promote better growth of grass on fairway and semi-rough.

Large deciduous tree at 15th green Medal – reduce in size in order to allow clear shot to green from middle of fairway.

Removal of poor quality trees; for example at left of 2nd hole Medal, right of 3rd hole Medal, right of 15th hole Medal, left of 17th hole Ashludie.

Tees

4th tee Medal – 2 sunken areas to be verti-drained and dressed with sand to level the tee.

14th tee Medal – sunken area with sprinkler head to be raised and re-turfed.

Other Winter Projects

- Large mound on 13th/14th Ashludie – remove broom and gorse from right hand side of mound (looking from 13th tee) and recontour the slope on right side to allow rough to be cut in order to widen 13th fairway, thereby improving the playability of the hole for shorter hitters.
- Burn at 6th/7th Medal – in areas where burn banks are eroded, use of wooden posts to stabilise burn banks, coupled with adjustment of burn banks to give more level areas for 'lift and drop' out of the burn. Start with small trial area, and extend as necessary.
- 13th green Ashludie – Lift turf from small area at front left of green, raise level, and re-turf to make green flatter in that area, but retaining some degree of slope.
- Improve walk-off area at 4th green Medal by using ryegrass mixture.
- Improve paths and artificially surfaced tractor tracks.

Approved at Links Board meeting on 26 September 2017.